

these. A messenger from Rochelle arrived in London with letters for the King, which, it was supposed, contained proofs of Latimer's understanding with the French. They were seized before they reached their destination, and the bearer was hidden away in prison. News of this reached Lord Percy, who at once laid a statement before Parliament; but when the messenger was ordered to appear at the bar, he could not be found. It was whispered that he had been murdered, and men recalled the fate of the King of Navarre's messenger, who had a few years before been found strangled in prison, when in the custody of Lord Latimer. Such reports, whether true or not, got wind, and roused the populace to such acts of violence as throughout this period play the part of our modern indignation meetings. In wild suspicion of all the great men, many of whom they rightly thought to be playing a double part, the City mob threatened to burn to the ground the palaces of all the Earls that lay in and about London, unless the man was forthcoming. As usual the effervescence of the prentices acted as a wholesome tonic to the politicians. The messenger was at once produced. When, however, he appeared at the bar of the Lords, he had nothing to say against the accused peer. Thomas de Katrington, the governor of St. Sauveur, who had surrendered the fortress at the orders of Lord Latimer, and was the other chief witness on whom the prosecution depended, disappointed the Commons by similar silence. It was loudly declared that they had both been bribed, and certainly, if the messenger from Rochelle had really been in Lord Latimer's hands some days, there were a thousand ways in which he could have been silenced. It is, on the other hand, impossible to condemn even Lord Latimer solely on the hearsay of his enemies reported by a prejudiced chronicler.¹ Only this is certain: that he was condemned, not on these charges of treason, but on the ground of his financial speculations, of which no doubt could exist.² The Duke thought it necessary, in view of the popular feeling, to pronounce sentence himself against the man who had trusted to him in committing the frauds; he was condemned by the Lords to prison, he was deprived of

• *Chron. A.ng.* > 81-ft. * *Bof. Parl.*,
ii. 826, sec. 28,